

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 AID-05 EB-07 FEAE-00 COME-00

INT-05 PA-01 PRS-01 USIA-06 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00

HEW-04 AGR-05 AGRE-00 SS-15 SP-02 H-02 NSC-05 CIEP-01

OMB-01 TRSE-00 PC-01 /091 W  
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R 141320Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3391

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L GEORGETOWN 1824

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAID, GY, UR

SUBJECT: SOVIET TECHNICAL GROUP TO VISIT GUYANA

REF: GEORGETOWN A-58 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: SOVIET 13-MEMBER TECHNICAL GROUP IS SCHEDULED TO ARRIVE LATE THIS MONTH TO SURVEY POSSIBILITIES OF SOVIET ASSISTANCE TO GUYANA. EMBASSY BELIEVES SOVIETS WILL PLAY THE VISIT FOR MAXIMUM PROPAGANDA MILEAGE, BUT WILL NOT COMMIT THE USSR TO LARGE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM. BURNHAM DOES NOT APPEAR TO BE WILLING TO PAY THE POLITICAL PRICE NECESSARY TO OBTAIN A LARGE SOVIET ASSISTANCE PROGRAM AND, DESPITE BURNHAM'S FINESSING OF THIS, THE SOVIETS KNOW IT. WE DO EXPECT A DOUBLING OF THE SOVIET PURCHASES OF SUGAR OVER LAST YEAR (50,000 TONS VS 20,000 TONS). END SUMMARY.

1. EMBASSY SOURCE WAS TOLD BY MINISTER OF ECONOMIC PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT HOYTE THAT THE SOVIET TECHNICAL TEAM SCHEDULED TO ARRIVE IN GUYANA DURING LAST WEEK IN SEPTEMBER WILL BE COMPOSED OF TEN SPECIALISTS AND THREE INTERPRETERS. THIS IS MUCH SMALLER THAN THE 27-MEMBER GROUP WE HAVE PREVIOUSLY HEARD WAS COMING.

2. GROUP WILL BE HEADED BY ALEKSEI ZVIAGIN, SENIOR EXPERT,  
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COUNCIL OF MINISTERS, STATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AND ECONOMIC

RELATIONS. THE DELEGATION WILL INCLUDE EXPERTS IN MINING, TECHNICAL EDUCATION, HEALTH, MINERALS, FISHING, TIMBER AND ENERGY.

3. OF PRIME INTEREST TO THE GUYANESE WILL BE THE SOVIET REACTION TO GUYANA'S NEED FOR ASSISTANCE ON THE UPPER-MAZARUNI HYDRO-ELECTRIC PROJECT. WE HAD HEARD REPORTS THAT THE GOG WAS INTERESTED IN FORMING A MULTI-NATIONAL CONSORTIUM, INCLUDING SUCH DIVERSE PARTICIPANTS AS THE UNITED STATES, THE SOVIET UNION, JAPAN, BRAZIL, VENEZUELA, THE ARABS AND OTHERS. EMBASSY SOURCE SAID THAT THE CONSORTIUM IDEA HAS NOW BEEN DROPPED, BUT GUYANA STILL INTENDS TO SEEK FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR THE PROJECT FROM VARIOUS DONORS FOR SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PROJECT.

4. COMMENT: THE SOVIET CHARGE HERE HAS SAID TO ME THAT IT WAS DIFFICULT FOR THE SOVIET UNION TO INTERACT TECHNICALLY WITH COUNTRIES WITH A LOW LEVEL OF TECHNOLOGY SUCH AS GUYANA. BUT THIS MAY HAVE BEEN MISINFORMATION DIRECTED AT THE US. NEVERTHELESS, I TEND TO DOUBT THAT THE SOVIET UNION WILL COME THROUGH WITH A LARGE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR GUYANA, DUE TO THEIR OWN LIMITATIONS AND TO PRESENT INDICATIONS THAT BURNHAM IS NOT READY TO PAY THE POLITICAL PRICE NECESSARY. OUR GUESS IS THAT THE SOVIET TEAM WILL SEEK TO CONVEY A FORTHCOMING ATTITUDE, HINT AT EXTENSIVE COOPERATION, AND PLAY THE VISIT FOR MAXIMUM PROPAGANDA VALUE, WHILE COMING THROUGH WITH A MINIMUM AMOUNT OF ASSISTANCE. IT CAN BE EXPECTED, HOWEVER, THAT THE SOVIETS WILL INCREASE THEIR PURCHASES OF SUGAR, CONCEIVABLY UP TO 50,000 TONS IN COMPARISON TO THE 20,000 TONS THEY TOOK LAST YEAR. WE ALSO NOTE THAT THE SOVIET UNION WAS THE MAJOR PURCHASER OF GUYANA ALUMINA LAST YEAR, TAKING 92,000 TONS. BLACKEN

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